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A. S. Moore

#601

corner of 31st & Walnut

Epilepsy

Epilepsy

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Introduction

Non curare sed celeri, vita, & morte.
It was my intention to have written on a species of *Eupatorium*,
medical qualities of which have hitherto been discovered in South
America to people extraordinary interest in the cure of the bite of the
Adder: but being disappointed in getting sufficient & satisfactory
information relative to this plant, I am obliged at a late period of this
work to make choice of an other subject, & have now to beg your
indulgence while I offer a few hasty remarks on Epilepsy.

Having had an opportunity of seeing this disease & its treatment,
made it the subject of the present dissertation, but notwithstanding
no degree of diffidence, as I am aware of its ^{being a} disease difficult
understanding & when once completely formed that it has baffled the
skill of some of the ablest physicians, & by many it has been thought
uncurable. I am inclined however to believe that this disease
can be cured even in its most inveterate forms.

I trust it will not be considered arrogant at my early
in coming forward to attack this bold disease when I shall
have stated some facts that confirm me in this opinion.

On this subject it will not be effected that I could
have many original ideas as it has been ably treated ^{by} Professors
Allen, Rush, & Barton; & in preparing this dissertation I avail
myself of the information which I have acquired from these
writers, & also from my own observation, which although
limited I hope will not be without interest.

To subjoining this Essay to the examination of the Faculty,
I would feel much anxiety for its fate, were I not sensible that
honesty & liberality, are equal to their bearing.

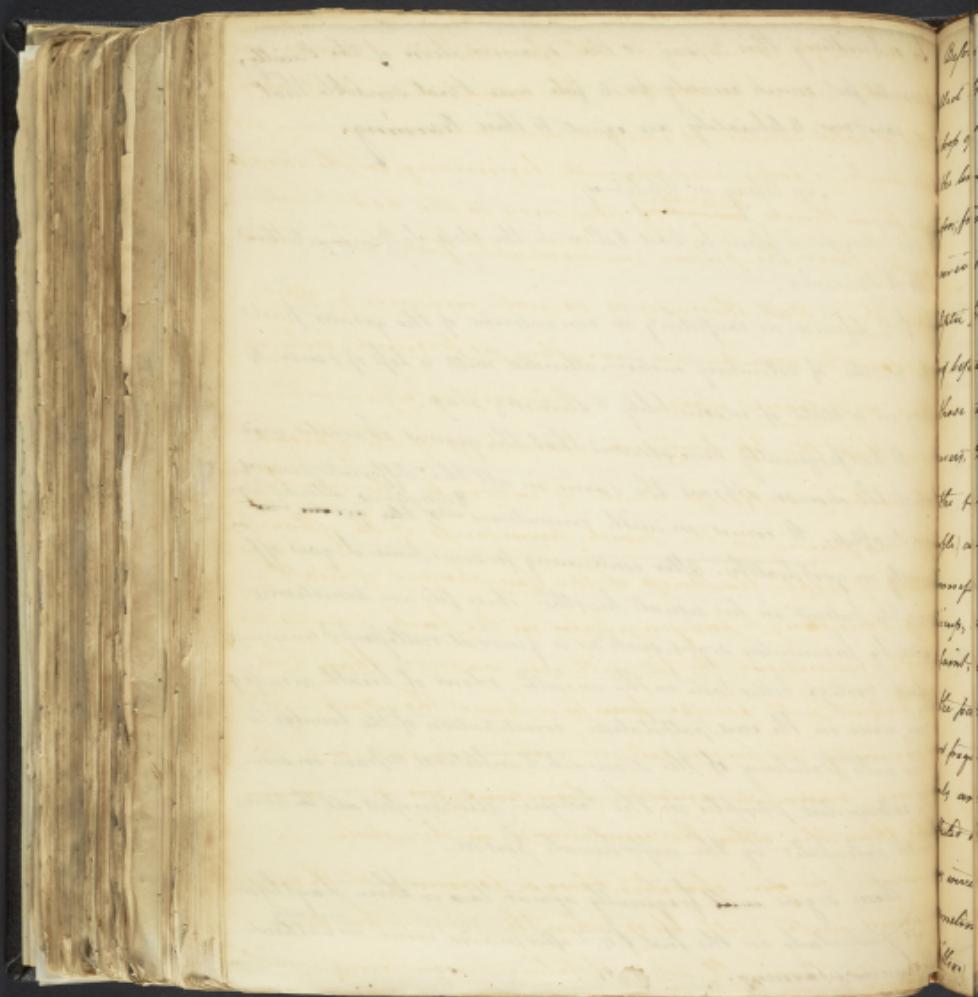
An Essay on Epilepsy.

(This) disease is placed by Doct. Cullen in the class of Paroxysms, & third
class of Spasmodic.

It is defined as consisting in convulsions of the greater part
the muscles of voluntary motion, attended with a loss of sense, &
being in a state of insensibility & turning sleep.

It has frequently been observed that the general character and
course of the disease appears the same in all the different persons
whom it affects. It comes on with convulsions ^{symptoms} ~~of the~~ ^{always} ~~great~~, but
suddenly in good health. After continuing for some time it goes off
leaving the patient in his usual health. These fits are sometimes
preceded by forewarning signs, such as a general restlessness, & uneasiness,
headache, vertigo, bitter taste in the mouth, colour of breath, redness of
face, noise in the ears, palpitation, constipation of the bowels to-
gether with flatulency of the stomach, & intestines, & pain in some
the extremities, pinpricks on the tongue, sleepiness, & all the known
death anticipator by the unfortunate person.

(These) signs will frequently appear two or three days before
the fit, particularly in the first fits, & afterwards come on ^{insensibly} ~~without~~
any previous warning.



Before the fit comes on in other persons there is a sensation
and the Aura epileptica. The patient describes it as if
bod of cold water, or vapour was moving in some part
the limbs, or body, most frequently beginning in the toes, &
from thence ~~ascending~~ ^{ascending} appears to the head, & when
this is there the person immediately falls down in an
epileptic fit. But these signs do not commonly appear
of before the attack, nor are they as frequent as includes
those mentioned above. It is said by experienced
men, that the common warnings of the approach
the falling sickness, as it is called by the common
people, are pains in the bowels, numbness of the extremities,
loss of sight, hardness of the face, shortness of breath,
cough, vomiting & purging, pain in the back & desposition
hard, & sometimes the fit will rise no higher than this,
the patient will escape ~~from~~ to a time of the attack: but
frequently the person falls in violent convulsions, the
limbs are violently agitated; sometimes one side is more
twitched than the other, the countenance much distorted, the
unwinked, fingers clenched, there a foaming at the mouth,
sometimes mixed with blood, when the tongue has been
torn. He loses all sense of feeling, Desomiting involun-

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charges of urine, & feces. These convulsions last only a short time when ^{intoxication} takes place; but the fits are frequently mixed with great violence, & the length of time they last varies in different persons. After the convulsions have ceased, the patient generally falls into a stupor, insensible state, as if in a sound sleep; for 1, 2, or even 6 hours; he then gradually recovers his senses, but has no recollection of anything that took place in ^{paroxysm}. During the fit the pulse & respiration are quick, & irregular, but after the convulsions, they return to their healthy state.

These are the general symptoms of the disease, but they vary in violence, & duration, in different persons, & at different times in the same person.

There is great variety in the returns of this disease. Many persons have several slight fitful fits in a day - sometimes they occur seldom once a day, or once a week - sometimes once, two, or three times a year & the interval has been known to last 12 years, & then the attacks were renewed with greater violence.

The continuance of the fit is most commonly from a quarter of an hour to 2 hours, & in more extraordinary cases the patient stupor for two, or three days, during which time frequent convulsions occur. After convulsions ^{somewhat} usually know that they have had them, being so little fatigued, or injured, while others feel great dull aching numbness, for several hours, or a head ache such as is

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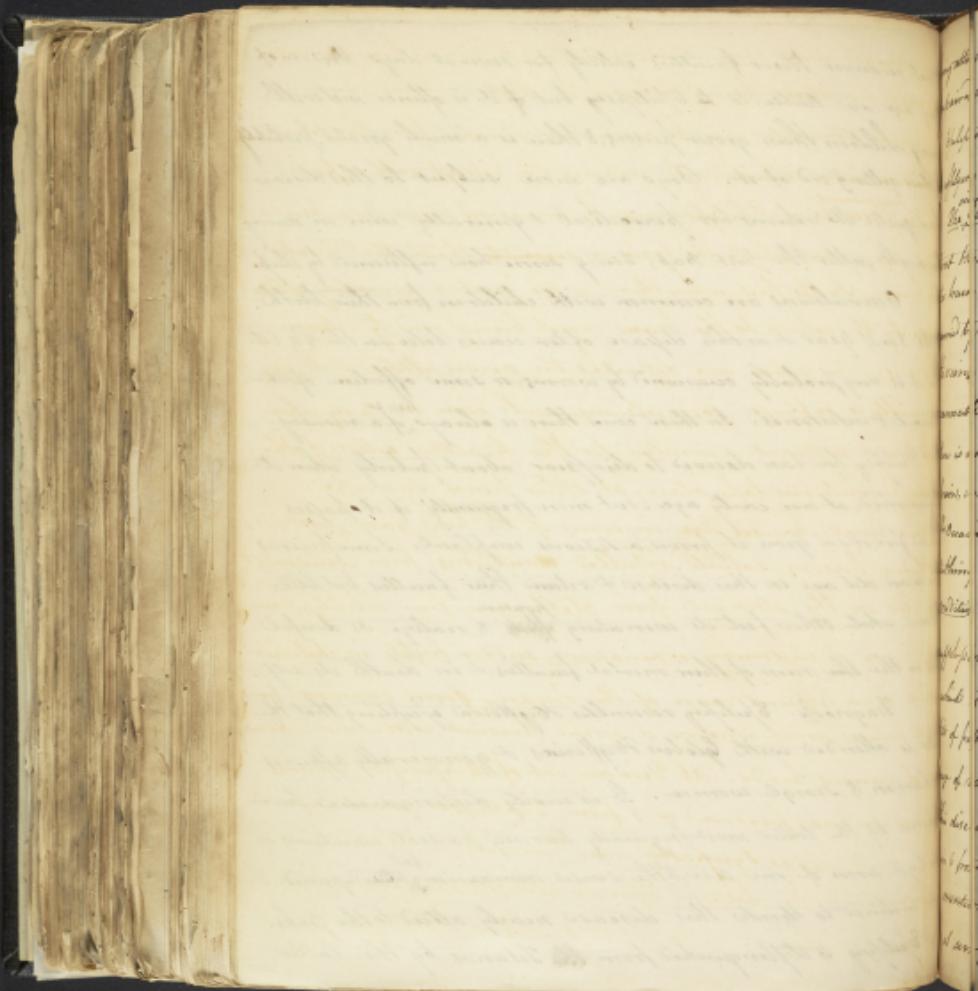
not recover their faculties entirely for several days. Persons of
any age are liable to Epilepsy but if it is often met with
among children than grown persons, & there is a much greater probability
of their getting rid of it. Boys are more subject to this disease
than girls. Its attacks are periodical & generally come on during
the night, after the first nap, being somehow influenced by sleep.

Convulsions are common with children from their birth
the 3 or 4 year & as this disease often ceases before the 3rd eth.
or it is very probably occasioned by worms, or some affection of the
lungs & intestines. In these cases there is always ^{heat & sweat} of a nervous.

Epilepsy has been observed to disappear about puberty when it
commences at an early age: but more frequently if it passes
beyond fifteen years it proves a tedious complaint. Some persons
live to an old age in this disease & retain their faculties but little
diminished, while others feel its ^{power} ~~influence~~ & realize its dreadful
acts in the loss ^{and} ruin of their mortal faculties, & in death its self.

Diagnosis. Epilepsy resembles Hysteria excepting that the
latter is attended with Globes Hysterics, & generally afflicts
barren, & single women. It is easily distinguished from
Hysteria by the latter most frequently having partial convulsions of
the leg & arm of one side, & the sense remaining ^{but} after pain. I
am inclined to think this disease nearly allied to the jocks.

Epilepsy is distinguished from ~~the~~ ^{the} Titans by the latter



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ing attended with some giddiness without the senses being much
hurt, & without being followed by sleep.

Epilepsia Simulata may be easily distinguished from this disease
by giving a Vol. Alkali, or by striking the patient with a pin.

^{occasional} The Causes of Epilepsy may be arranged under two heads
but those that excite the brain, & secondly those that weaken
the brain. In the first when there is too great a quantity of blood
sent by the arteries to the brain, & not being readily returned by
the veins, the vessels are distended, the nerves affected & it is
conceivable to suppose convulsions would come on. 2dly when
there is not sufficient stimulus for the healthy action of the
brain, convulsions take place at other times syncope.

Occasional causes are injuries of the head, pain, worms,
itching, poisons, calculi, ruptured eruptions, from contusions
and fits in the stomach, from plethora - from debility, from
application of customary evacuations, sudden frights in children
which is a frequent cause of this disease, from occasions from
loss of property - great confusion of mind frequent intoxication - Hemorrhage
of various kinds. (At Vienna out of 14 Epileptic patients
the disease was produced in 8 from suppressed catarrhonia &
in 6 from terror ~~as~~ sympathy may produce it. Doctor Rush
mentioned in his Lectures 6 persons who fell down in convulsions
at seeing a person in a fit, & that 5 of a Portuguese family

of this disease. Doctor Barton relates in his lectures an instance of a woman who fell down in a fit at seeing a church on fire.

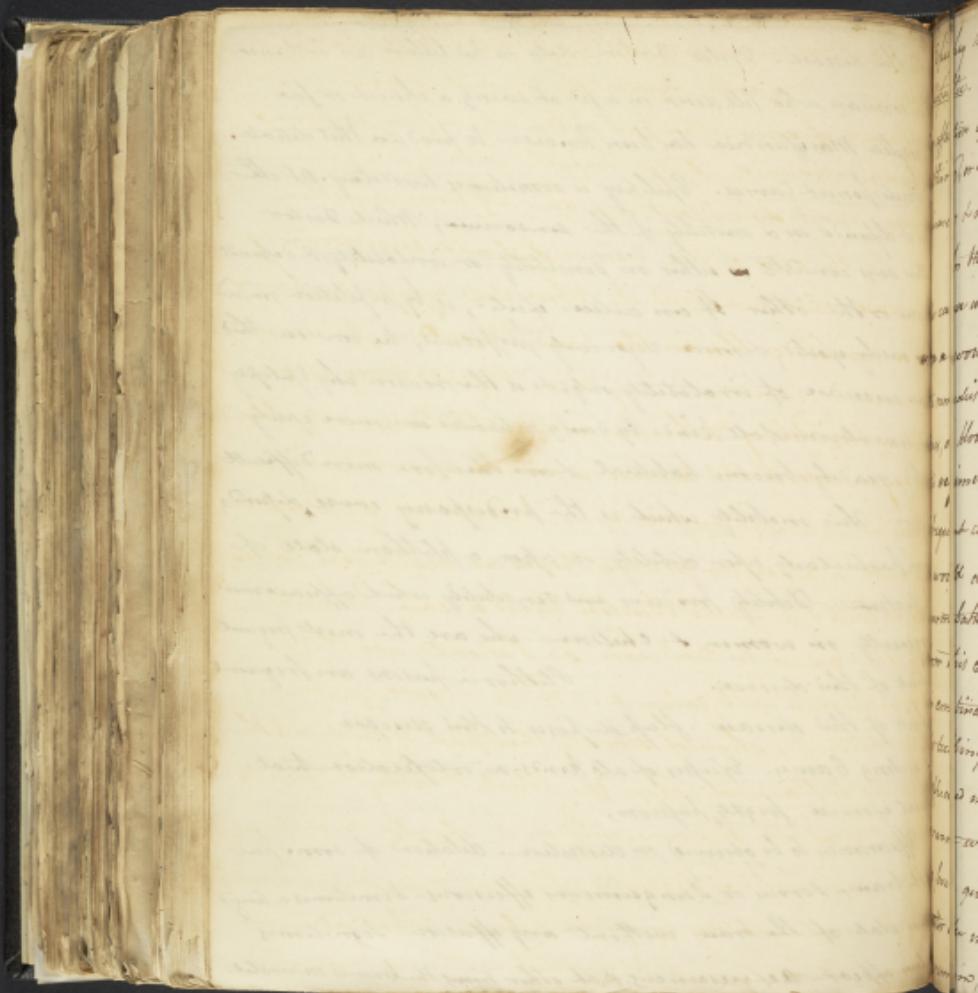
Agititia Manifardica has been known to produce that disease.

Predisponent Causes. Epilepsy is sometimes hereditary. At other times it depends on a mobility of the sensibility; which Doctor Barton says consists in either in sensibility, or irritability, & depends on one or the other. If an action excited, is, by repetition rendered easily excited, & more vigorously performed, he considers this as a consequence of irritability only; & it is the reason why Epilepsy & convulsions of all kinds, by being repeated are more easily excited, readily become habitual, & are therefore more difficult to cure. This mobility which is the predisposing cause, depends in particularity upon debility, or upon a plethoraic state of the system. Debility producing sensibility which appears more frequently in women, & children, who are the most frequent subjects of this disease.

Stithosis persons are frequent subjects of this disease. Slip dispose to this disease.

Exciting Causes. Epilepsies of all kinds, as intoxication, heat, violent exercise, fright, passions,

Appearance to be observed on dissection. Dilatation of some parts of the brain, serous or sanguineous effusions - sometimes a tense state of the brain without any effusion. Sometimes less appear - & when these are, & at other times the brain is inturated.



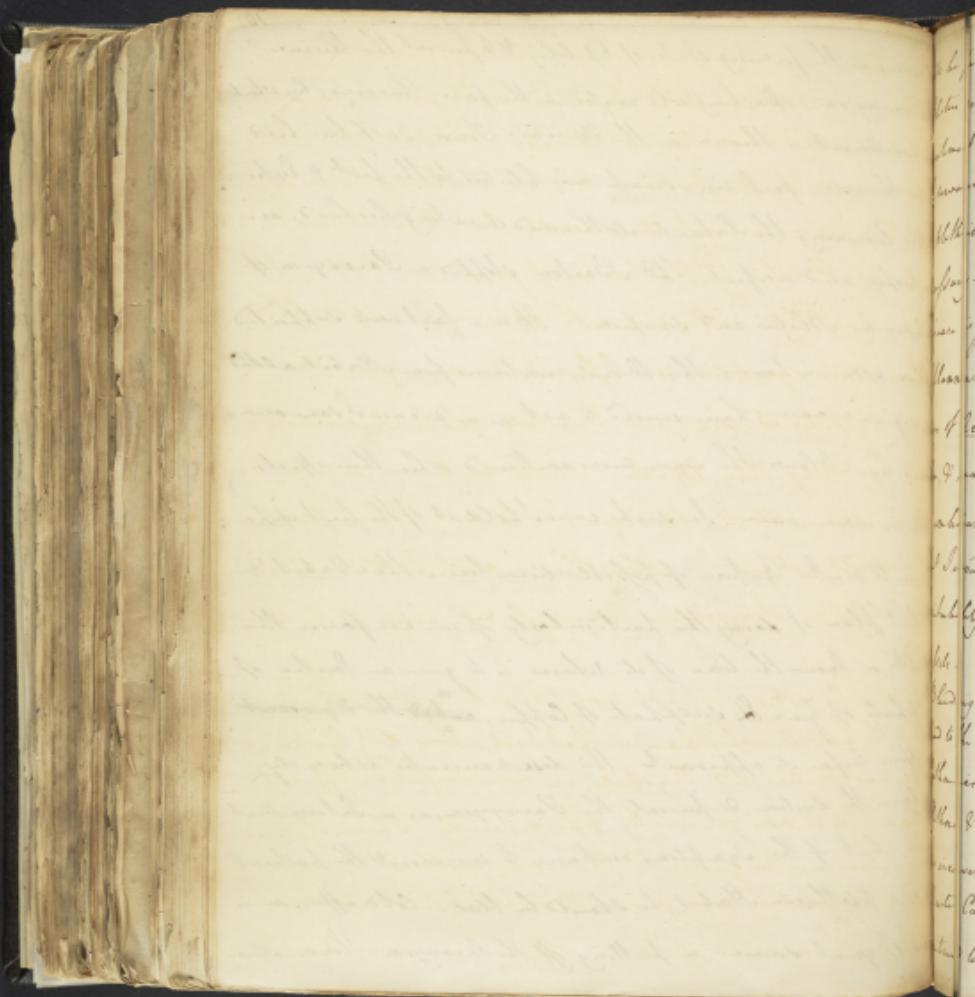
Syphilis has been usually distinguished into sympathetic & syphilitic. It is called sympathetic when it is produced from affection of some other part of the body as from contusion, stings, or wounds. Called Syphilitic when it is a primary disease, & not dependant, or proceeding from any other.

In the cure of this disease I should be governed by the cause which occasioned it. When it is sympathetic, & arises from a wound, or blow on the head, I should make use of remedies recommended by Doctor Physick & Dasey, in such cases, as blood letting, cathartics, cold applications, & antiphlogistics in regimen. If this disease is produced by worms, which are a frequent cause among children, I would use such remedies as would dislodge, or destroy them, as mercurial purges & warm baths &c. Doctor Barton cured a case produced by this cause by Valerian, so I should use this medium in combination with calomel. If the disease is caused by teething, we should scarpify that part of the gums that appear inflamed, open the bowels & bathe the feet in warm water. If fever comes on I should treat it as a fever, give saline draughts, spirits of Nitre, & Antimonials. After the inflammatory symptoms subside, & partial fever removed, I have found blisters behind the neck of great

view, & to the extremitie to liven the excretions in the head,
bring on regular action. After this obtained the cure will
reformed. If the Disease is accompanied by the Aura
Nervosa, we should endeavour to cut off the Communication
of the brain by a Ligature, which is calculated to have suc-
ceeded in the hands of Professor Jeffreys of Dublin. If this plan
should not succeed, it is advised to cut out the part that gives
rise to the Aura, or apply a Blister, & if the disease appears to
have been composed, a wounded bone, which can be con-
sidered as proper to divide it as recommended in St. Vitus.
The Disease proceeds from suppressed evacuations such as
menorrhagia. Balsas should be applied, as near the Genito-
urinal as possible, Blister pills, and warm fomentations
to the part are recommended. If from Catarrhia being suspected
should employ the Remedies recommended by Dr Chapman
that can - if the system be too much excited. I would
add - if there be much debility, I would have recourse to
a nourishing Diet, Cathartics, Polygala Tonga with some Resonac-
ia, Elixer Pangaeic, & the warm Bath. -

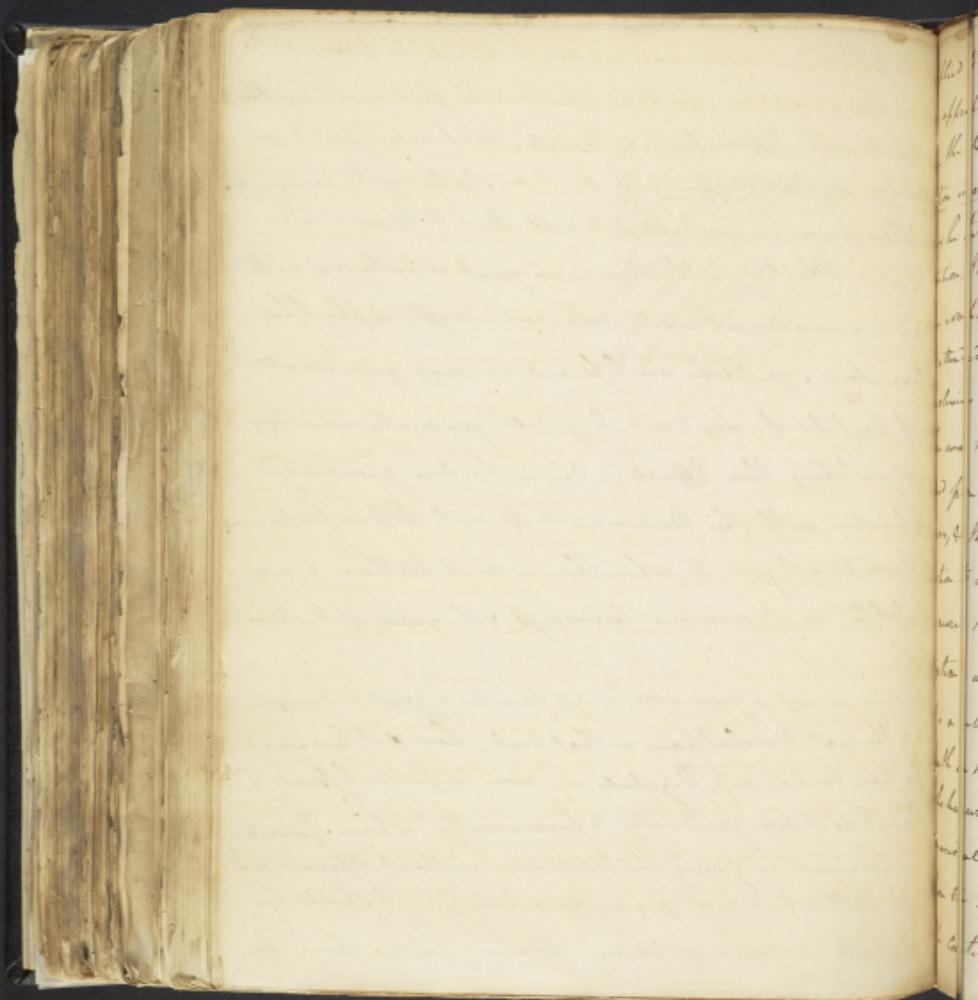
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patients in the forming state of Epilepsy & to prevent the Disease
coming on - Dashing cold water in the face, Running (by which
exertion is thrown on the Muscles) Tossing, sulphur bled
in the nose, fresh air, sennepines, blisters to the feet & &c he-
re, loosening the Patient's clothes, and elevating his head, are
proper and useful - Dr Barton stepp'd a Paroxysm of
Epilepsy by Blisters and Sennepines - It is a fact well supported
that in some instances this Disease continues from Habit although
original cause have ceased to act, as in a case I saw occa-
sioned by Blows, the convulsions continued when their effects
however were over - In such case I hold it of the first impor-
tance to make certain of possible discontinuance the Habit, &
the best plan of doing this particularly if we can force the
back, or know the time of its return, is to give an Emetic of
Sulphate of Zinc & Sulphate of Copper, ~~and~~ ⁱⁿ the day ~~next~~ ^{after}
the time before its approach - This dose vanquishes extremely
all the system, & prevents the Paroxysms, as in Intermittent
fever: but if the symptoms continue to increase, & the patient
is of a plethoric Habit, he should be bled - Cold affusion is
also of great service in putting off the Paroxysm - Irrigation



be found peculiarly serviceable if the fits are frequent.
Uterine and Saponaria should be applied to the feet to increase the
secretion in the Detumescer, and Muscilas, which with often it con-
serves system, & assist very much in softening the paroxysms.
Uterine paroxysms, a vegetable, and with Nut, & Saponaria are
serviceable - Plastic Cathartics are of great importance as the
liver is generally attended with costiveness - After the
fearful symptoms are lessened, we may give small
quantities of Acetate of Lead, and Digitalis gradually increasing
them, & watching their effects. Opium has been recommended
in combination with this Medicine to prevent Colic &ictus, but
I would not give it when there is much plethora & no
doubtly, as it increases costiveness, & the action of the blood
vessels -

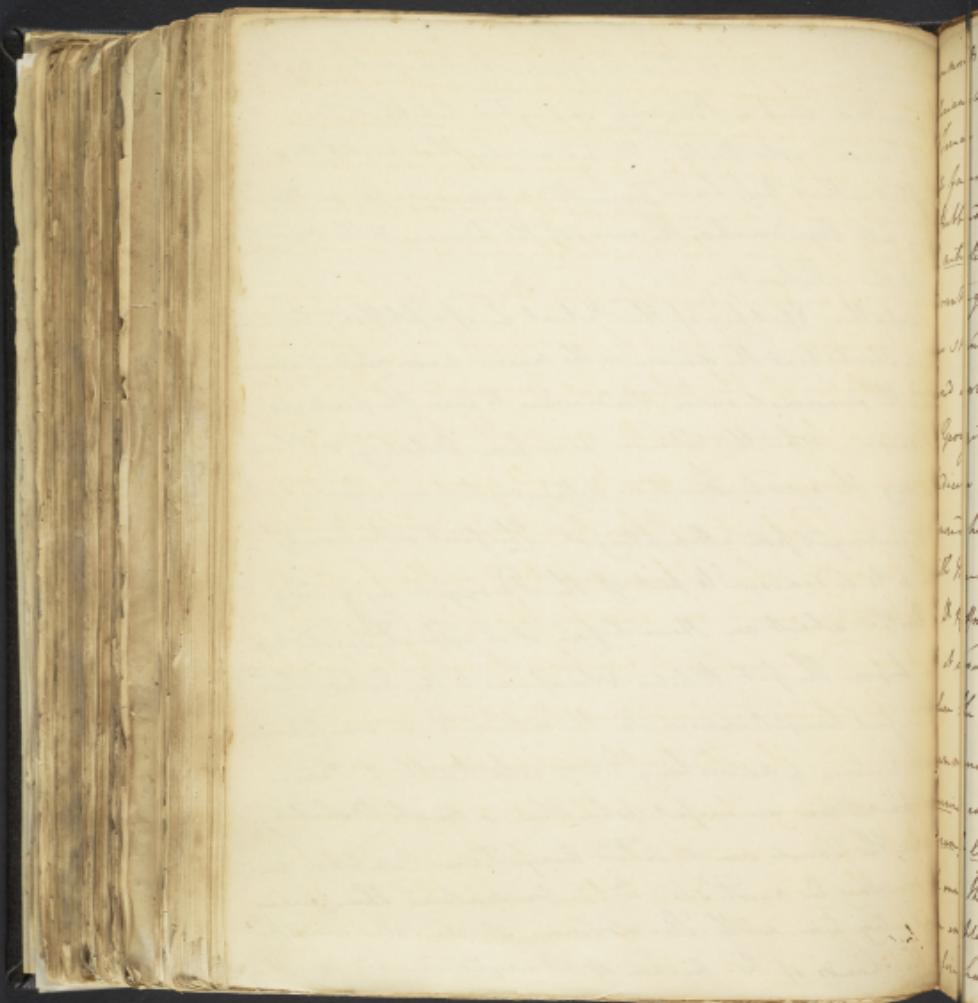
Bleeding is not advisable unless there be a great tendency of
it to the head, & violent pain in that part - Low diet, Saponaria
Shaltier, Sennier and Digitalis, are more useful in lessening
fear, & do it more gradually & permanently. I have found
no inconvenience in giving the Medicine without Opium as
Plastic Cathartics were frequently exhibited. It should be
administered till its desired effects are obtained - Scleros should be



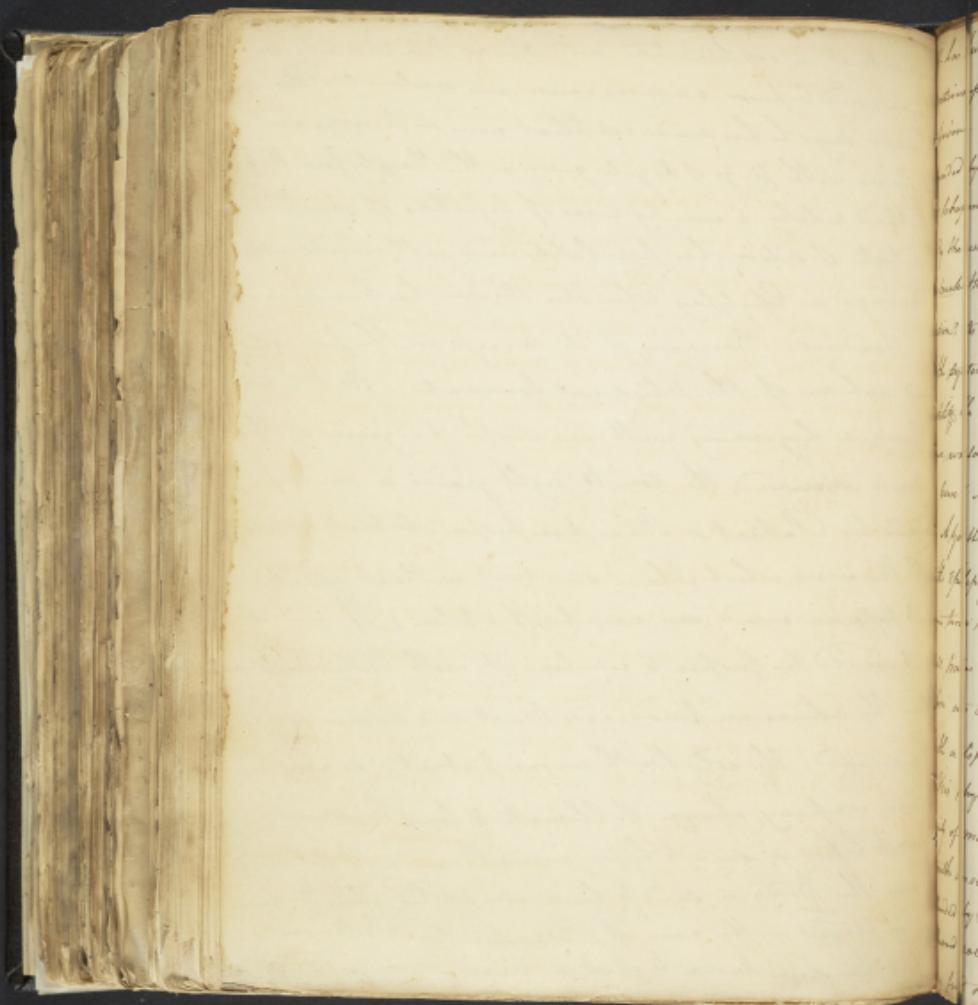
fixed to the back of the neck and on the left arm. Whenever
a fit appears we should give an Emetic, throw cold water
on the Head, avoid all the exciting causes - After the asthma
is completely reduced a Decoction of Rosemary
will be taken as common Drink - By pursuing this course with
them, I believe a cure may be obtained tho' the disease have
completely formed, & continued from Habit - I have been
attended with success in cases to be mentioned in the sequel
obtaining Bacon from the treatment recommended in Epilepsy, when
it was marked Exhaustion in the system, and the disease came
from Habit - The emetics were given to put off the paroxysm,
& the other Medicines, with a view of reducing asthmatical
action to a healthy standard; without this we cannot expect
cure. The Wistler is given as a Tonic after reducing the
asthma - at the same time the patient should be informed that
is a celebrated Remedy which may induce him to have
faith in the Medicine - It is highly spoken of by Dr. Tracy
who has written on Epilepsy - It has all of service in de-
ranging Turgescence to the surfaces, & to divert irritation
from the Brain - Diet and Exercise assist in changing
the Constitution which is necessary to a cure - On the contrary

have seen a variety of Remedies fail, which have been highly recommended, such as Bleeding, Salivation, Antipathodies, Tonics & cold Bath. - The reason why these are less more useful is that they have ^{been} prescribed indiscriminately without laying into Consideration, the cause of the Disease, & the condition of the Patient -

Inopathic Philosophy if the Patient be of a plethoric Constitution we should treat the disease in the manner recommended above, and the occasional cause, & endeavour to cure the predisposing cause - When this Disease arises from Debility, & is long enduring the cure becomes more difficult, but we should not be discouraged from attempting it. The first intention of us is to endeavour to part of the Paroxysm by giving Sarcin about an Hour before it is expected, cold Supper before the fit, Blister & Thermopism to the Extremities useful Auxiliaries - In the intervals we would recommend Exercise, a nourishing Diet, cold Bath & Tonics - Antipathodies are useful when there is much Mobility when the Spirits are depressed Asafoetida, Camphor, Amber may be resorted to - Dr. Barton mentions three cures made by him with Thermomium - it was also successful the hands of Dr. Ascher of Maryland - Dr. Park



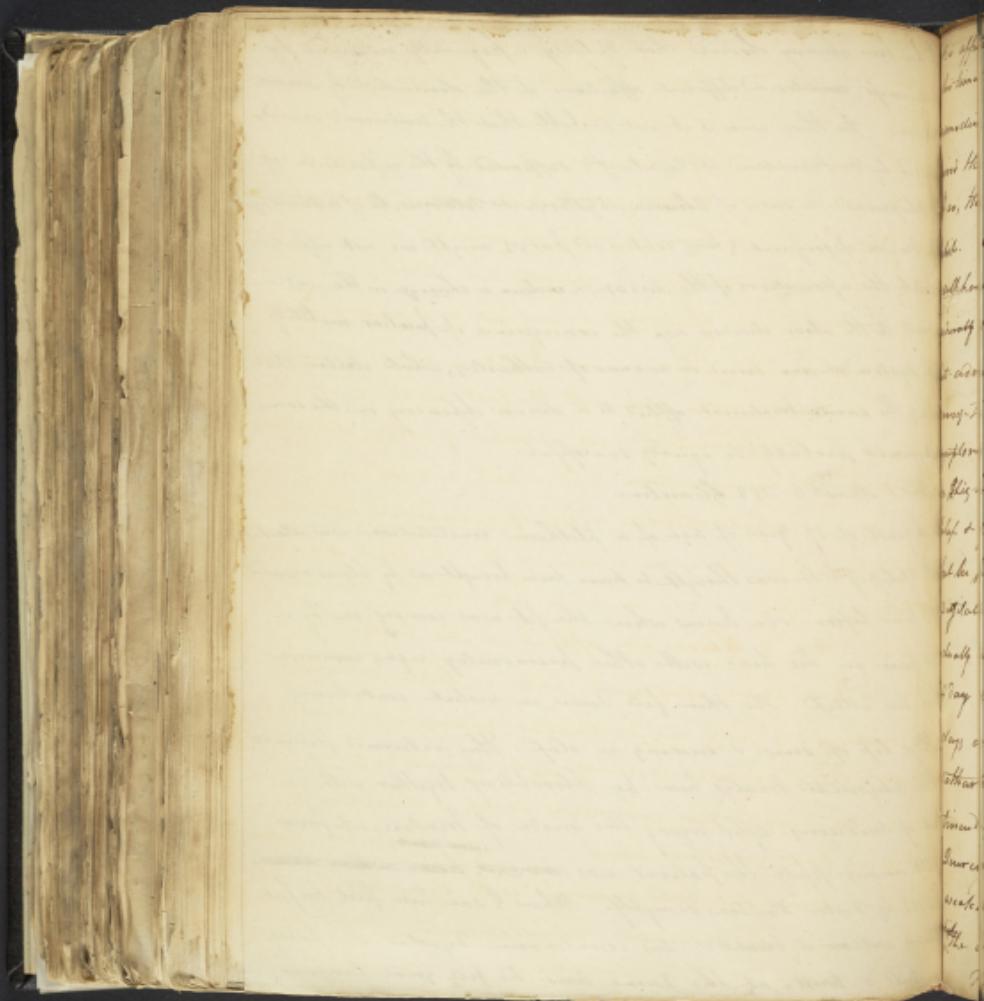
and to in combination with Opium, Camphor & Gallic
acid, and Cuprum ammoniacum, are valuable Remedies.
Forster says he has made complete cures in persons with
a fever with 30-50 of Dr. Hale's given in the Tumet by four Hours.
Habard relates a cure by means of Injections of Muri-
cubate of silver has been lately used with considerable
advantage in Epilepsy when this Disease has been of many
years standing. Two cases of its success in the first and
second volumes of the Physical Journal. Dr. White
Georgia beginning with one sixth of a grain of this
Medicine increased the dose to eight grains in one day
and his Patient - It has been proposed to treat Epilepsy
in Germany, which I have seen tried without effect.
Dr. Hoffman cured one case by this plan; It would be
proper to combine it with Valerian -
In the returns an periodical Bath and aperient are
recommended - The cold Bath very important - So are
wine, company, change of Climate & long Journey -
Cato life is said to have cured Cesar - Blistering
over the Body is said to have completed cures, & have
been employed in the case of Bonaparte. Falling into
fire has been known to effect a cure



how far already observed that Epilepsy is frequently induced by
actions of, &cavities, & different affections of the stomach, & by worms,
fevers. So these cases is it not probable that the treatment recommended
by Dr Hamilton of Edinburgh, supported by the experience of
what has been done in cases of Chorea, hysteria, & tetanus, be of advantage
to the use of frequent & long continued purges, might we not effect
but the agitations of the disease, & induce a change in the condition? As the above diseases are the consequence of peculiar morbidity
the hysterical are cured by means of cathartics, which destroy that
disease, the same treatment applied to a disease depending on the same
would probably be equally successful.

Case 1. March 6. 1812 of Carlisle

A youth of 17. years of age of a plethoric constitution was attacked
by Epilepsy. It was thought to have been brought on by blows received
a time before. He knew when the fit was coming on by a
sensation in his head with other premonitory signs common
to an attack. He then fell down in violent convulsions
失去了 sense & ending in sleep. They returned frequently
His physicians treated him by bloodletting together with a
variety of medicines. after trying this mode of treatment four
months unsuccessfully the patient was ~~recovered~~ ^{recovered} ~~but~~ ^{but} ~~he~~ ^{he}
treated by Doctor Boston & myself. When I saw him first his face
was pale & bloodless his countenance depressed. His pulse
was full & strong, at the same time he fell great languor;



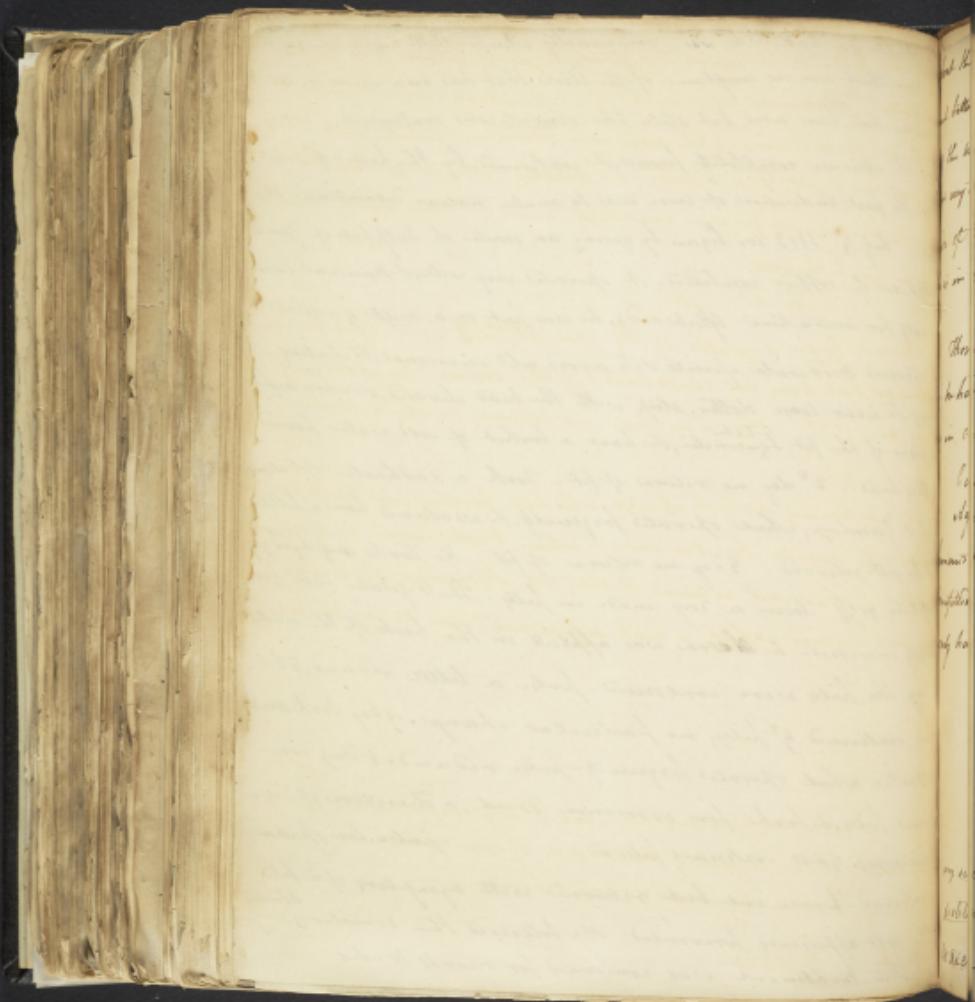
the appetite was bad, & he was occasionally attacked with Hemiplegia -
but then there was no complaint of the blood that had been received, as
sometimes has been used, but still the convulsions continued. I con-
sider the disease completely frustrated, & contaminated by the power of habits.

Also, the first indication of cure was to make nature detoxicate the
body. July 15. 1813 we began by giving an emetic of sulphate of Zinc

sulphate of copper continued it operated very well, & discontinued
safely for some time afterwards, he was put on a milk & vegetable
it derived moderate exercise, & to avoid all occasional, & trifling
trifles. To wear loose clothes, sleep with the head elevated, & when in
expectation of the fit ^{take} camphor, & have a bucket of cold water ready
near the head. 2^o day no return of fit - Took a cathartick of Colon
sulph & Gamboge, which operated frequently, & we observed him a little
at the fit relieved. 3^o day no return of fit. He took a syr. hedyph-
ysatol 30 gr. twice a day made in jelly. The Tympanitis was pro-
gressively increased - a blister was applied in the back of the neck

3^o day the fits were continued - pulse a little reduced. 5^o day
fits continued & fit, no particular change. 7^o day took a cathartick
which operated frequently - pulse reduced. 8^o day con-
tinued fits, & took for common drink, a mixture of various
herbs, & to continue fits = pulse low, patient

weakened - broke out but returned with symptoms of a fit
the cold affusions prevented. He followed the directions ^{strictly} in
this treatment was continued for near 4 weeks



but the 9 week his spirits & appetite began to return & he soon
I better. Moderate exercise & company was advised. No
the use of medicine, & the diet was removed. Alcoholic bills were
in any other night for a week to obviate convulsions. By this
use of treatment he was completely cured. I have lately heard
is in good health.

Case 2. 1811.

Thomas Gray a youth of 16 was ~~subjected to~~ epileptic fits
he had had from his childhood by the same treatment
in case 1. &c. He has had no return of the disease.

Case 3.

A gentleman 40 year of age who had Epileptic fits
under the same treatment, & when I left home was much
improved, & had no return of the fits. However six weeks
only has elapsed which is not sufficient time to try the remedy.

I have now come to a close, and it only remains for me to return
my sincere thanks, to each of the Professors of this University, for the
picturing & valuable information I have received. —

Philadelphia
March 10. 1812

